that sulphate of zinc is the principal ingredient in other secret caustic remedies. A few days ago, after showing some examples of the caustic properties of sulphate of zinc to Dr. Johnston, of Worcester, Massachusetts, during a brief visit which he paid to Edinburgh, that gentleman stated to me, that from accidental information which he had obtained from a druggist, he believed sulphate of zinc to form the basis of one, if not more, celebrated secret American applications for the cure of cancerous disease.

"Caustics are often used in practice for other purposes than the extirpation of cancerous and cancroid malignant and semi-malignant ulcerations and deposits; and I have successfully employed sulphate of zinc in fulfilling most of the indications for which escharotics are resorted to, as for example—

"1. In the treatment of indurated inflammatory ulcers of the cervix uteri. To this part it can be readily applied, either through a speculum, or still more easily by means of a small ivory or wooden cylinder and piston, like the common leeching tube, or like Dr. Locock's glass tube for carrying silver solution; or in the form of a medicated pessary, made up with a small quantity of axunge or glycerine.

"2. In cases of lupus and rodent non-malignant ulcers of the nose and face, and other integumental parts. Here we must not forget Rayer's rule, that not one, but a succession of applications of any caustic, is generally necessary for ultimate success.

"3. In the annoying and intractable ulcerous forms sometimes assumed by certain cutaneous affections. Thus, I have seen it arrest a case of *Impetigo Rodens*, which, in despite of various applications, had gone on progressing for two years.

"4. In eating down the small red sensitive tumours so common at the orifice of the female urethra, and in the neighbouring vulvar mucous surface.

"5. In destroying ulcerated condylomata and warty excrescences.

"6. In several cases I have easily introduced the sulphate of zinc and glycerine paste, by means of a small catheter-like tube and piston, into the proper cavity of the uterus, to cauterize the open surfaces and diseased structures leading to obstinate menorrhagia; and which deep points it is, I believe, sometimes difficult, or indeed impossible to reach with any other efficient caustic. In the uterine cavity, as elsewhere, sulphate of zinc acts only upon any abraded and diseased surfaces that exist, and not to any extent upon the parts covered with healthy mucous membrane.

"7. I have tried to take advantage of the highly contracting power of the cicatrices left by sulphate of zinc in the replacement and sustentation of chronic prolapsus of the uterus and bladder.

"It will, perhaps, be found also adapted to the treatment of some obstinate ulcers of the limbs, and to the early cauterization and destruction of syphilitic chancres and pustule maligne.

"Other practical applications of sulphate of zinc as a caustic will, no doubt, betimes suggest themselves to the minds of the clinical Surgeon and Physician."

MEDICAL PATHOLOGY AND THERAPEUTICS, AND PRACTICAL MEDICINE.

16. *Effects produced on the Blood by Mental Labour.*—Dr. Theophilus Thompson read a paper on this subject before the Medical Society of London (Nov. 29, 1856). He commenced by remarking that the requirements of advanced civilization make increasing claims on the mental and physical energy, as the number of aspirants for distinction multiplies, sympathy becoming more intense, taste more fastidious, competition more keen, and the necessary concentration of mind on any special subject of pursuit involving exhausting effort. Intellectual, like muscular action, probably involves an expenditure of living material, and introduces a changing series of particles, those which have been

used giving place to others which come with the energy of new life to perpetuate the action. Stagnation may induce decay, but undue persistency, haste, or intensity, especially in creative efforts, may occasion waste. The author proceeded to adduce examples. One instance was an account-keeper, who, after being for some weeks engaged twelve hours daily at the desk, lost the power of fixing his attention, and became affected with such sensitiveness of the nervous system as to be frequently kept awake at night by tingling of his skin, and, when he fell asleep, disturbed by frightful dreams. There was no emaciation, loss of appetite, or disturbed digestion, and the urine was natural, with the exception of a few oxalate-of-lime crystals; but there was a strong venous hum in the jugular veins, a slight cut bled freely, and the blood under the microscope exhibited a remarkable deficiency of pale corpuscles, the proportion not being more than a fourth of the average in health, or a twentieth of what is common in phthisis. This patient, with better regulated habits, and the use of cod-liver oil and nitro-hydrochloric acid, has rapidly improved. The author observed, that the clergy, being specially exposed to the wear of thought and sympathy, are peculiarly liable to this disordered condition of the blood, their nervous system becoming unduly susceptible, and their minds rendered too easily accessible to the delusions of pseudo-science and quackery. He described the case of a popular clergyman, who, without impairment of digestive or muscular power, became affected with sleeplessness and disturbed contiguity of thought, the principal physical symptom being jugular murmur. Nitro-hydrochloric acid, cod-liver oil, and subsequently phosphate of iron, with phosphoric acid, were employed with most satisfactory results. Dr. Thompson was disposed to think, that the wear of inordinate and anxious work acted as a succession of shocks through the nervous system on the blood, and he illustrated his views by histories of effects produced by sudden and violent shocks, physical and mental, showing that railway collisions occasionally produced results analogous to those depending on intellectual causes, and adducing an instance from the practice of Sir Henry Marsh of death from entire change of the condition of the blood, without any other organic disease, induced by the mental shock occasioned in a young lady by having accidentally administered poison to her father. After relating instances illustrative of the exhausting effects of exclusive attention to one object, and remarking on the varying phenomena resulting from differences of temperament, or from association with indigestion and other collateral ailments, the author proceeded to show, that in addition to measures directed to the regulation of the mental habits, medicines calculated to enrich the blood were most important auxiliaries, and that oils could often be employed when chalybeates proved too exciting. The class of cases referred to, pointed to the conclusion, that over-work of the brain may often occasion deterioration of the blood before the condition of other organs disturbs the brain. The probably hereditary transmissibility of such conditions makes them of incalculable importance, and happily they are amenable to treatment. The author concluded with remarks on successive changes in the prevailing type of disease. The plethoric condition prevalent in the seventeenth century gave place, in the eighteenth, to gastric congestion. This condition has now ceased to predominate, and we have perhaps entered on an anæmic era, likely, if not corrected, to prove unfavourable to the production of great men. As respects the application of medical theories, a wider range of view should be sought. If the medical art is to render a full share of good to the community, it must be not simply in treating the maladies of individual patients, but by ministering to the conditions which disturb the vitality of the race. Thus, whilst improving our appliances for daily work, remembering that we are enlisted in the service of mankind, we may make posterity our debtors."—*Lancet*, Dec. 13, 1856.

---

17. *Tache Meningitique.*—Dr. Baines, in a communication to the Western Medical and Surgical Society (London) stated that Dr. Trousseau was wont to draw the attention of his pupils to the occurrence of a red mark or stain, which was readily observable on the skin of a large number of hydrocephalic children; to this he gave the name of the "tache meningitique, or tache cerebrale." Dr.